

the possible loss of small pieces of stone. Finally, a cleaning was carried out to eliminate the dirt that had accumulated over the years when the *moai* was exposed to traffic. During the entire process the *moai* remained under a plastic tarp. The present good state of conservation should last at least 15 years, and the process then should be repeated.

The Fonck Museum has a project of remodeling the three halls dedicated to Easter Island. This remodel will permit the exposition of the 1,400 items that the museum possesses in a modern museum site. To better protect the *moai*, we hope to place it inside the museum.

The Corporacion Museo Fonck wishes to publicly thank the Easter Island Foundation and Dr. William Liller and his wife for their donations of money that permitted this costly conservation treatment of the *moai* from Ahu One Mahiki.

*Maururu, Dr Claudio Etcheverry P, President, and
Dr Adolfo Fernandez C., Vice President*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DEAR EDITOR,

[Enclosed is] a photocopy of a postcard which has the same image as the photograph of the shipwrecked crew of the *El Dorado* (it would have been good if it had been a different image) [See *RNJ* 15(1):36]. I bought this card at a postcard fair a year or so ago. It was an expensive card but I took a leap of faith and bought it, as, written on the back in pencil, it said "wrecked off Easter Island". None of the books in my Easter Island collection mentioned the *El Dorado* and I put the card away in a drawer and forgot about it, until reading the journal last night I find the entire fascinating story. I'm glad I bought the card. Unfortunately it is not used so there is no definite date [on the card], and no publisher's name but the instructions are in English. I would say that from the sepia tone and the "This space for Correspondence" it is likely to be roughly contemporaneous with 1914/15 or so. The fact that there were postcards probably indicate that the story was well known at the time. This has spurred me and I will try to do some more research.

Best wishes and keep up the good work.

David Maddock, Hants, UK

Thanks, David, for a fascinating follow-up on the ill-fated *El Dorado*. It is assumed that Captain Benson went on the lecture circuit after he returned (at least we know that he intended to do so, and thus took his lifeboat with him on his return from Tahiti). He likely used the lectures as opportunities to sell his book, and had the postcards printed as further items to sell to his audiences. There must be more postcards out there somewhere. Katherine Routledge mentions the wreck of the *El Dorado* in her book, *The Mystery of Easter Island* (p.126-7). Percy Edmunds commented to Routledge that Captain Benson "had been a whaler in his day." Ed.



DEAR EDITOR,

Last Monday I received 15(1) of *Rapa Nui Journal*. The *Journal* has become an impressive publication, but then it was

before as well. This is particularly so for the article I just read. I feel it has given me inspiration. This is the short paper by Riet Delsing "Pacific Voyaging: A Subjugated Knowledge."

I cannot truly express my feelings about this presentation. It puts into words many of my thoughts about what I have called the Nusantara Maritime Trading and Communication Network. Many archaeologists and prehistorians have considered my ideas and concept of the Nusantara as total nonsense. I have had two different feelings about this, one that I have been unable to explain my concepts of the Nusantara and the evolution of these concepts and the other that the critics are right, it is total nonsense. As time goes on, I feel more and more that my first expressed feeling is correct.

I have attempted to present the evolution of my thoughts and concepts on the Nusantara in an article that is presumably coming out this month in the proceedings of a small symposium that was held in Finland last November. This conference was organized by Clifford Sather (csather@jeas.unimas.my) with the water people of Borneo as its subject. I was not able to participate in this conference but Cliff very kindly asked me to contribute a paper explaining my hypothesis of the Nusantara Maritime Network. I was willing to do this, as over the last year I have been feeling more confident that my ideas on this subject are not nonsense.

I include here my latest definition of the Nusantara Maritime Trade and Communications Network (Solheim, n.d.):

I have defined, redefined and discussed several times the Nusantara Maritime Trade and Communications Network (1975a-b, 1976, 1981a, 1984-1985, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2000). Amongst other things I added "Communication" to the title (Solheim 1994). Also, I originally referred to the people as the Nusantara and included many different varieties of maritime orientation as defining these people. When I use the title "Nusantao Maritime Trade and Communication Network" I am referring only to a portion of the Nusantara people, i.e., those involved in maritime trade. There are no clear boundaries between the many different maritime orientations of these people as some of them often change for a time from one orientation to another and at times are involved in two or more of these orientations. As an example, a common situation is men being away from their homes for several months fishing, and then trading the dried or smoked fish for money or other materials, but their spouses and children remain at home and tend to the farming. Always the maritime part of this is the unifying element of "Nusantao."

I would like to add here that the "Nusantao people" who are not maritime traders were and are descended from the people of the Nusantara Maritime Trade and Communication Network" who were and are active traders and these Nusantara people were and are still very maritime oriented.

The origin of my thoughts on the Nusantara Maritime Trade and Communication Network began through my development of the concept of the Sa Huynh-Kalanay Pottery Tradition. This concept has been questioned by many as being so loose and all-encompassing that it has no meaning. I was therefore delighted last year to receive a copy of an honors thesis by Ambika Flavel for the Bachelor of Science Degree with the Centre for Archaeology of the University of Western

Australia (1997). This statistically tested the concept of the Sa Huynh-Kalanay Pottery Tradition. I need to thank David Bulbeck for sending me a copy. Details of this thesis are presented in my article to be published in June 2001. I only need to say here that her study demonstrated that the Sa Huynh-Kalanay Pottery Tradition, as I have proposed it, is real and includes the site of Gua Cha in Peninsular Malaysia. She added several items of description to the definition.

What does Riet Delsing's article in *Rapa Nui Journal* have to do with my definitions and evolution of the Nusantara Maritime Trading and Communication Network? One of the difficulties, apparently, with accepting the concept of the Network is in conceiving of a network that is not planned by its members or recognized by them. Delsing's article, to me at least, points out the difference of viewpoint between a traditional, western anthropologist (archaeologist) and the people being studied. Traditional western archaeologists put concepts into a western context, in this case where a network would have to be planned and organized by some sort of leadership. In the case of the Nusantara Maritime Trading and Communication Network there was no plan and no one organized it; it just developed through the expansion of the area through which the Nusantara maritime traders explored and became acquainted, along coastlines and up major rivers.

Delsing is concerned with Polynesian voyagers, navigators, and traders and their folklore which has been taken as myth by traditional western anthropologists. I have hypothesized that the Polynesian voyagers were a part of the expanding Nusantara Maritime Trading and Communication Network and if this is correct, her arguments would apply as well to the Nusantara people of Southeast Asia and elsewhere. One difference, however, is that no one has made any attempt in the very little research on the present-day Nusantara to find out if they have any folk history concerning the origin of their way of life. Because there have been so many changes over the several thousand years of their existence, all folk history of their early origins may be long forgotten. We won't know until we ask them.

Wilhelm Solheim II
The Philippine Islands

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